

**IN THE CLAIMS**

Current Listing Of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:  
  
determining a dry etch rate of a sacrificial, light absorbing material (SLAM) and  
  
of an interlayer dielectric (ILD) material;  
  
comparing the dry etch rate of the ILD material with the dry etch rate of the  
  
SLAM;  
  
altering ~~the~~ a composition of the SLAM by altering the carbon to silicon ratio of  
the composition of the SLAM prior to etching to provide a changed dry etch rate for the  
SLAM such that the dry etch rate of the altered SLAM is approximately equal to the dry etch  
rate of the ILD material.
2. (Original) The method defined by claim 1, wherein altering the composition of the  
SLAM increases its dry etch rate.
3. (Original) The method defined by claim 1, wherein altering the composition of the  
SLAM decreases its dry etch rate.
4. (Original) The method defined by claim 1, wherein the SLAM comprises a  
polymer-based material.
5. (Cancelled)

6. (Cancelled)

7. (Cancelled)

8. (Cancelled)

9. (Cancelled)

10. (Cancelled)

11. (Cancelled)

12. (Cancelled)

13. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:

selecting a sacrificial, light absorbing material (SLAM) for use with a dielectric material in a damascene process;

comparing a dry etch rate of the SLAM with a dry etch rate of the dielectric material when both the SLAM and the dielectric material are etched at the same time;

determining whether the dry etch rate of the SLAM needs to be increased or decreased to match the dry etch rate of the dielectric material;

altering ~~the~~ a composition of the SLAM by introducing carbon in a cyclic or a cage form to increase or decrease ~~its the etch rate~~ dry etch rate of the SLAM such that the dry etch rate of the altered SLAM matches the dry etch rate of the dielectric material.

14. (Original) The method defined by claim 13, wherein the dielectric material is a carbon doped oxide.

15. (Original) The method defined by claim 14, wherein the SLAM is a polymer-based material.
16. (Cancelled)
17. (Cancelled)
18. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~17~~ 13, wherein the ~~halogen is fluorine~~  
cage form is adamantyl.
19. (Cancelled)
20. (Original) The method defined by claim 19, wherein the SLAM is a siloxane based material.
21. (Cancelled)
22. (Cancelled)
23. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:  
altering ~~the~~ a composition of a SLAM by adding a fluorine-containing additive to  
the composition of the SLAM prior to etching to provide a changed dry etch rate for the  
SLAM such that the changed dry etch rate of the altered SLAM is approximately equal to a  
dry etch rate of an interlayer dielectric (ILD) material;  
forming a via opening in a layer fabricated from the ILD material;  
filling the via opening with the altered SLAM; and

etching a trench approximately centered on the via opening ~~such that~~ wherein the ILD material and the SLAM etch at the same rate.

24. (Original) The method defined by claim 23, wherein the ILD material is a carbon doped oxide.

25. (Original) The method defined by claim 23, wherein the ILD material is a polymer based material.

26. (previously presented) The method defined by claim 23, wherein adding a fluorine-containing additive comprises adding a low molecular weight polyvinylidene.

27. (previously presented) The method defined by claim 23, wherein adding a fluorine-containing additive comprises adding a perfluoropolyether.